

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

New York art exhibit gives graphic picture of Nazi Holocaust in Latvia
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 86/NO. 9 MARCH 7, 2022

SWP takes truckers' fight in Canada to working class

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Members of the Socialist Workers Party have been building on the momentum of the recently concluded successful renewal campaign to introduce the paper and the party's election campaign to workers and farmers at plant gates, strike picket lines, political events and on their doorsteps.

They're making special efforts to meet truckers to discuss the conditions they face and how working people can defend ourselves.

"Fuel prices are high, freight is low. And the shippers and receivers keep us waiting for 13, 14 hours and we don't get paid. I'm for the Canadian truckers," Chris Weber told Eleanor García, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from California, at a truck stop she visited in Castaic, north of Los Angeles, Feb. 20. Weber, from Minnesota, works for a nonunion trucking company.

García said that farmers are also

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Machinists in Iowa strike in struggle over wages, respect

BY DAN FEIN

DAVENPORT, Iowa — "It's a wonderful feeling to be in a room with 242 union members and 98% vote to go on strike and reject the company's 'first, last, best and final offer,'" striker Scott Lang told this *Militant* worker-correspondent on the International Association of Machinists union picket line here Feb. 20. He was describing how the members of IAM Local 388 and Local 1191 voted three days before to go out on strike against Eaton Corporation.

Eaton is a defense and aerospace manufacturing company with military contracts, making equipment like air-to-air refueling systems. Many of the jobs take months of training. There are more than 360 hourly workers at Eaton's Cobham Mission Systems facility here, 269 of them IAM members. Iowa is a "right-to-work state," meaning state law bars unions from establishing a closed shop, so

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Defend the independence of Ukraine! Moscow out now! Get Washington out of Eastern Europe!



Reuters/Alexander Ermochenko

Russian tank in Donetsk Feb. 22. Flagrantly violating Ukraine sovereignty, Moscow claims that Ukraine is part of Russia and sends troops, tanks into eastern provinces, surrounds country.

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Russian President Vladimir Putin Feb. 21 declared that the Moscow-backed "People's Republics" of Donetsk and Luhansk set up in Ukraine in 2014 were independent countries and ordered Russian troops to go in as "peacekeepers." The Kremlin's invasion is backed by the largest military mobilization on the European continent since World War II.

"The Socialist Workers Party demands Moscow pull its tanks and troops out of Ukraine and respect the sovereignty of Ukraine," Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party leader and candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives from New Jersey, told the press the next day. "Since the

Bolshevik Revolution broke apart the czarist prison house of nations in 1917, the communist movement has backed the right of Ukraine and all nations to self-determination and independence.

"The SWP also demands Washing-

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Protest Canadian rulers' Emergencies Act attack on workers' protests, rights!



Reuters/Blair Gable

Canadian police use pepper spray as they wade into truckers and other protesters in Ottawa Feb. 19, part of largest use of government-ordered repression in modern Canadian history.

BY STEVE PENNER

MONTREAL — "The sweeping police operation carried out under the anti-working-class Emergencies Act against the three-week protest in Ottawa, Canada's capital, by truckers and others opposed to vaccine mandates is an assault on the political rights of all working people," said Philippe Tessier, Communist League candidate in a Quebec provincial by-election in the riding of Marie-Victorin. "It is one of

the largest acts of police repression in modern Canadian history and should be opposed by all unions and supporters of democratic rights.

"As of today — Feb. 22 — even though the cops have shut down the Ottawa action, the federal government is keeping the act and its restrictions on our rights in place, supposedly to keep the protesters from returning," he added.

The operation against the Freedom

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As Islamist attacks batter West Africa, Mali government orders French out

BY SETH GALINSKY

President Emmanuel Macron announced the withdrawal of French troops from Mali Feb. 17 after a nine-year failed effort to crush Islamist terrorist groups operating there and in other former French colonies. This comes on top of growing political instability, including coups in Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso amid worsening conditions for millions of working people.

The troops were sent to Mali in 2013 with the aim of stabilizing its capitalist government and French influence. They took the lead in combating armed rebels based among the

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SF school board recall reflects capitalist rulers' political crisis

BY TERRY EVANS

The ousting of three liberal members of the San Francisco school board in a recall election Feb. 15 is one more reflection of the political crisis wracking the capitalist rulers. After years of watching board members attempting to foist their "woke" politics on the cities' schools, parents organized to put the recall on the ballot and won the vote.

The outcome echoed last year's de-

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—On the picket line, p. 5—

Jon Donaire strikers rally in hard-fought California battle

10 months on the picket line, Vancouver hotel workers rally

Women’s rights fighter Jennifer Swayne thrown in jail in Wales

BY CATHARINA TIRSÉN

LONDON — In an attack on the rights of all working people, Gwent police arrested women’s rights campaigner Jennifer Swayne under thought-control “hate-crime” laws Jan. 23. They searched her home, seizing materials, including the book *Transgender Children and Young People: Born in Your Own Body*.

Swayne, who is disabled, was arrested as she was riding her mobility scooter and putting up homemade posters along the streets of Newport, South Wales. The posters included slogans, “respect women’s spaces,” “no men in women’s prisons,” and the statement “no child is born in the wrong body, humans never change sex.”

Cops detained her for more than 12 hours for “displaying threatening or abusive writing likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress.”

Swayne, a former teacher, says that when cops searched her home they confiscated her phone and hundreds of stickers, claiming they target transgender people. “Not one of them mentions anything horrible about any particular group,” Swayne said. Some of the stickers draw attention to violence against women.

The book seized by cops is a collection of essays that argue sex is biologically determined and that allowing children to undergo sex-change operations is dangerous. It is edited by Heather Brunsell-Evans and Michele Moore.

Brunsell-Evans, an academic at Kings College, London, told the London *Times* her book “should be of no

concern to the police.”

“My thinking is being investigated,” Swayne tweeted after her release on bail. One condition is she has to report to Newport police Feb. 24. Women’s rights groups have called a demonstration that day to support her and to protest the attack on free speech at 1:30 p.m. outside the police station.

The assault on her rights is one example of several similar attacks. Academics across the U.K. face threats and witch hunts for holding views that sex should take precedence over a person’s gender to protect women-only spaces. University professors Kathleen Stock and Jo Phoenix faced hostile campaigns by students and staff demanding that their classes be “shut down” by authorities. Their “crime” is expressing views that are based on scientific fact — that men and women are biologically different. A view shared by millions.

Second trial for killers of Arbery is double jeopardy

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

The three men convicted in November of killing Ahmaud Arbery and sentenced in a Georgia state courtroom to life in prison were prosecuted again for the very same crime, this time in federal court, in the same city. The constitutional right not to be tried twice for the same crime is being tossed aside by the federal government. They are using the well-founded outrage over the murder to extend the power of the U.S. criminal “justice” system, a system that already ensnares millions of working



South Wales Argus

Protest outside Newport Central Police Station Jan. 31 in support of Jennifer Swayne, whose home was searched and was arrested for having a book that says sex is biologically determined.

For working people and our unions “it’s vital to defend freedom of speech: the right to read whatever we wish and exchange views freely,” said Pamela Holmes, Communist League candidate for mayor of Tower Hamlets in London.

“We need these rights as we organize to fight bosses’ attacks.” Holmes urged others to join in defending gains won for women’s rights, such as women-only spaces in rape counseling, refugees, prisons and sports.

people, disproportionately Black.

Arbery was chased and gunned down in Brunswick, Georgia, by Travis McMichael, while his father, Gregory McMichael, a retired police investigator, covered him with a gun. A neighbor, William Bryan, used his truck to trap Arbery during the assault.

All three were found guilty by unanimous verdict. Travis McMichael was convicted on all nine counts, including malice murder, meaning he deliberately intended to kill Arbery. All three were convicted of aggravated assault, false imprisonment and attempt to falsely imprison. Gregory McMichael and William Bryan were found guilty of felony murder, which is when a group of people commits a felony where someone is killed, even if they weren’t responsible. They were sentenced to life behind bars, with only Bryan given any possibility of parole.

The Justice Department filed federal hate-crime charges, and after the state convictions secured a plea settlement with Travis and Gregory

McMichael. Because they’d already been convicted in the case once, they decided to plead guilty in this prosecution in return for the government’s promise they could spend the first 30 years of their earlier sentence in a federal prison.

But the Arbery family objected and the government reneged on the deal, sending the matter to federal court *after* the McMichaels had agreed in the bargain to statements that their acts had been motivated by racism.

This move has been widely applauded by liberals and middle-class radicals. Carol Anderson, an Emory University professor of African American studies, said the federal trial was “absolutely necessary,” calling it “part of the truth-telling that society must have.”

But the federal prosecution of hate crimes — once used as a way to get around the refusal of segregationist government officials in the South to prosecute racist violence against Blacks and denial of civil rights — is today increasingly being used to

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THE MILITANT

Defend Black farmers’ fight to keep their land

The U.S. Department of Agriculture along with local farm credit offices have denied generations of Black farmers loans, leading to foreclosure on their properties. The ‘Militant’ backs farmers’ fight for their land, helps build solidarity as the road to unite working people.



Kansas News Service/David Condos
Bernard Bates helped lead the fight by Black farmers to keep their land, inspiring others.

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SWP promotes truckers fight

Continued from front page
being squeezed by the capitalist crisis. She pointed to the need for solidarity among all working people. Weber nodded in agreement, describing friends in Wisconsin who lost their farm to foreclosure after working it for five generations.

“We need our own party, a labor party,” García said. “We can fight for such a party out of the struggles and experiences we go through on the road to replacing capitalist rule with a workers and farmers government.”

“Regulation, that’s the main issue. I call it money grabbing,” trucker Ernest Mullins told SWP members Susan LaMont and Janice Lynn at a truck stop in Ellenwood, Georgia, Feb. 16. “They increase the number of ‘safety blitzes’ you have to pay for, then there’s the rising cost of diesel and how the brokers continually try to cut the rate truckers get paid.” Mullins, who lives in Panama City Beach, Florida, has been driving for 15 years.

“Conditions are getting worse for all workers,” LaMont told him, “but some workers are standing up to the bosses’ assaults through their unions.”

“There’s so much government overreach, like trying to force everyone to take the vaccine,” said Mullins, who has been following the protests in Canada where truckers and others are demanding an end to government-employer vaccination mandates.

“Government vaccine mandates are an attack on our rights,” LaMont said. “But it is important that workers get vaccinated so we can be at work to organize together against attacks on our wages and working conditions.” She told Mullins that in Cuba, where working people made a socialist revolution, they have confidence in their government. More than 90% of the population has been vaccinated, without any mandates.

“Only working people ourselves can solve these problems. That’s why we need to take power out of the hands of the capitalists,” she said.

Mullins bought a copy of the *Militant* to read more about the struggles of the Canadian truckers.

Sara Lobman, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from New York, and Seth Galinsky spoke to truck drivers at a rest stop near Sloatsburg, New York, Feb. 21.

One driver they spoke to listened carefully when she explained that the SWP says workers should get vac-

nated but is opposed to mandates and that workers need to be organized into unions to fight for better conditions.

He said conditions for truckers had deteriorated in the last decade, from when he owned his own trucking company. Now he’s considering going back to work at a company organized by the Teamsters union because it has health insurance with no premium.

Companies hire workers as “team drivers,” he said. They drive for weeks, nearly 24 hours a day with one driver getting some shut-eye in the small loft in the cab, while the other drives.

After Lobman showed him the back cover of *Teamster Rebellion*, he bought the four-volume Teamsters series by SWP leader Farrell Dobbs, a central leader of the 1930s truck drivers’ strikes that built the industrial-union movement in Minneapolis and the push throughout the Midwest to organize over-the-road drivers.

In Richmond, California, SWP members and supporters joined oil workers picketing outside the Chevron refinery Feb. 17. Organized by United Steelworkers Local 5, the workers are pressing industry representative Marathon Petroleum to agree to wage increases and better conditions. And by picketing now they’re showing their readiness to strike.

“The maintenance unit I work at used to have over 80 Chevron employees and now I’m the only one left. The rest are contractors,” Tim Grace, with 37 years at the refinery, told SWP member Betsey Stone. Since the contractors are not as well acquainted with the plant, this is a safety issue for the workers as well as for the nearby community.

Second trial for killers of Arbery is double jeopardy

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erode defendants’ constitutional protection against double jeopardy. To give themselves options, federal prosecutors added additional charges, including attempted kidnapping, using firearms during the murder, and violating Arbery’s right to use a public street.

In addition to dealing a blow to rights working people greatly need, cases like this are inherently biased against the accused.

Once someone has been convicted, how do you find impartial jurors for a second trial on the same case? The federal court in Brunswick sum-



Eleanor García, SWP leader and candidate for U.S. Senate from California, speaks to driver Chris Weber at a truck stop in Castaic, north of Los Angeles, Feb. 20. With high fuel prices, low freight and long unpaid hours waiting, he said. “I’m for the Canadian truckers.”

At these pickets, eight refinery workers have signed up for *Militant* subscriptions.

Commemoration on lynching

SWP members from Miami attended a commemoration in Ft. Lauderdale Feb. 8 on the lynching of farmhand Rubin Stacy, which took place in that city July 19, 1935. More than 300 people took part in the memorial, including dozens of family members who came from around the country.

Stacy was one of 4,743 people lynched in this country between 1882 and 1968, according to NAACP records. Of the 282 people killed by lynching in Florida, 257 were Black and 25 were white.

“Children growing up now have no idea that these things took place in the past,” Pearl Mozie told Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for governor of Florida. Mozie said her husband had been working on drawing attention to the case for 30 years. “The *Militant* has been covering the fight for Black rights for almost a century,” said Fruit. Mozie signed up for a *Militant* subscription.

The work party members are doing now sets the stage for the spring international campaign to win new readers to the *Militant*, expand the circulation of books by revolutionary leaders, and win contributors to the Militant Fighting Fund. If you’d like to get involved contact the nearest SWP branch, listed on page 8.

moned more than 1,000 people from an area of southern Georgia spanning 43 counties to empanel a jury. So many of them said they knew about the first trial that U.S. District Judge Lisa Wood asked at one point, “Is there anyone who has *not* heard something about the case?”

The federal trial began Feb. 7 in Brunswick. Defense lawyers for Bryan and the McMichael’s rested their case Feb. 18, after calling only one witness. She testified that there were concerns about break-ins in the area, the reason the three defendants gave for the chase and attack in the first trial.

Prosecutors for the U.S. Justice De-

partment began closing arguments Feb. 21 after calling 20 witnesses, many of whom testified the three defendants had lengthy histories of making racist remarks about Black people.

But, because of the raft of other charges, prosecutor Christopher Peraras told the jury that it didn’t need to determine the three men were motivated by hate in a hate crime trial!

The jury the following day found all three of the defendants guilty. They now face up to life in prison for the federal crimes, on top of life sentences they previously received in state court.

This trial was a mockery of the Constitution and a blow to political rights.

LETTERS

Tennessee sub getting through

I am writing to check in and tell you I am still receiving the *Militant* and love my subscription you have given me freely from donations. Ya’ll guys are the best and thank you.

Will you please renew my subscription for me?

I can’t wait to receive my next issue.

A prisoner
Hartsville, Tennessee

Editor’s note: Another prisoner in Tennessee had informed us he wasn’t getting his paper and asked if we could do anything about it. We wrote to other subscribers there to see if they were getting their papers, and got the answer above. The *Militant*’s attorney contacted Tennessee officials, who said they had

corrected a “misunderstanding” and affirmed that the *Militant* is an “approved publication.” When we hear back from the inmate who was having a problem, we’ll let readers know. We fight every time we are banned or censored, and almost always win. If you’re behind bars and have a problem getting your subscription, be sure to let us know.

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

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Socialist Workers Party 2022 candidates

California

Eleanor García, US Senate
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Florida

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Lisa Potash, US Senate
Sam Manuel, Governor

Illinois

John Hawkins, US Senate
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Kevin Dwire, Lt. Governor
David Rosenfeld, US Congress

New Jersey

Joanne Kuniansky, US Congress
Lea Sherman, US Congress

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Sara Lobman, US Senate

Ohio

Samir Hazboun, US Senate

Texas

Alyson Kennedy, Governor
Gerardo Sánchez, US Congress

Washington, DC

James Harris, Mayor
Arlene Rubinstein, Delegate to House

Moscow out of Ukraine now!

Continued from front page

ton keep its military might out of the region,” Kuniansky said. “The U.S. capitalist rulers are not interested in Ukraine independence, but in their own imperialist interests in the region and in weakening Russian competition. The aspirations of Ukrainian workers and farmers can best be defended by their own mobilization and action — as they did in the Maidan revolution in 2014 — and solidarity from working people worldwide, including in Russia.”

Moscow’s goals are to reassert the Russian rulers’ lost sway over Ukraine, and over all of the Eastern European territory it lost control over with the implosion of the Soviet Union in 1991. And it seeks to push back against U.S.-led NATO expansion in Eastern Europe.

Moscow’s war sets in motion the threat of deadly and uncontrollable consequences for working people in Ukraine, Russia, Belarus and beyond.

In a major speech Feb. 21, Putin justified Moscow’s invasion, claiming Ukraine is a fake country that belongs inside Russia. He blamed its existence on V.I. Lenin, the Bolshevik Revolution and its defense of the right to self-determination.

Putin also demands Washington guarantee the exclusion of Ukraine from NATO, and that NATO military forces be withdrawn back to their 1997 lines.

Moscow and Minsk announced Feb. 20 that 30,000 Russian troops in Belarus for joint military exercises would stay in position on the Ukrainian border. Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko is a close ally of Putin after relying on Moscow’s help to brutally suppress mass protests resisting his theft of the elections in 2020.

Svetlana Tikhonovskaya, Belarus’ opposition leader exiled after winning those elections, told the press Feb. 23 that the people of Belarus don’t want Moscow’s troops “on our lands. We do not want to be a country that is an aggressor to our Ukrainian brothers.”

Tens of thousands of Russian soldiers are also in Crimea, with dozens of Russian warships and landing craft in the Black Sea. All told, the Kremlin now has up to 200,000 troops either in eastern Ukraine or poised along its borders.

Acting to protect U.S. imperialism’s economic and strategic stakes in the region, the Pentagon doubled the number of U.S. warships in the Mediterranean Sea, with an aircraft carrier group redeployed from the Pacific. The nearly 5,000 U.S. troops in Poland are working with Polish forces to prepare for an anticipated flood of Ukrainian refugees when war breaks out. Israel is making preparations for

refugees who are Jewish.

The U.S. rulers and their allies have sent some “defensive” military hardware to Ukraine. But they are determined to avoid being drawn into a military conflict in defense of the country’s sovereignty, or to allow it to “spill over” elsewhere.

Instead, Washington has begun implementing sanctions against “new investment, trade and financing” by U.S. entities in Russia. These sanctions will come down hardest on the Russian people, but will also have an economic impact across Europe. Berlin has temporarily suspended the controversial Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline from Russia, which will exacerbate energy shortages in Germany and elsewhere on the continent.

Putin blames Lenin for Ukraine

The Russian president’s speech attacked Ukraine’s right to exist, denying it had achieved “stable statehood.” He claimed it was “an inalienable part” of Russia’s history and culture. He condemned “the severing of what is historically Russian land” by the Bolshevik Revolution.

There was a brief period during the early Russian Revolution — in the 1920s while Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin was alive — when the independence, the culture and the languages of Ukraine and other oppressed nationalities were encouraged. This was the Ukraine of which Lenin was “the author and architect,” in Putin’s words. This was brutally reversed as part of a bureaucratic counterrevolution against Lenin’s policies led by Joseph Stalin.

Putin, harking back to the Russian Empire, is driven by the expansionist appetite of Russia’s capitalist class to try to restore its domination over oppressed nations that were formerly part of the Soviet Union. Putin said that it was “madness” in 1991 for Moscow to give “these republics the right to leave the union without any terms and conditions.”

The nationalist “disease” Lenin and the Bolsheviks fought against was Great Russian chauvinism, the nationalism of the oppressor at the heart of the domina-

SF school board recall reflects rulers’ political crisis

Continued from front page

feat of former Democratic Party Gov. Terry McAuliffe in Virginia, expressing the revulsion of working people toward high-handed actions by politicians and school administrators toward parents and students alike.

Democrats Alison Collins, Faauuga Moliga and Board President Gabriela López were turned out by resounding majorities of more than 70%. Democratic Mayor London Breed backed the move to unseat them and will select their replacements. López smeared her opponents, including a significant percentage of the city’s Asian population who voted to oust her, as bigots. “If you fight for racial justice,” she said, “this is the consequence. Don’t be mistaken, white supremacists are enjoying this.”

Under their leadership, the board drove to change the name of 44 public schools that López claimed embody “colonization” and “ties to slavery.”

In fact the name-changing exercise was an effort to wipe out the record of historical and revolutionary figures like Presidents George Washington



Above: Al Jazeera/Emre Caylak; inset, nemtsov-most.org
Hundreds protest Moscow’s assault on Ukraine’s sovereignty Feb. 22 in Mariupol, a city in the mostly Russian-speaking region of eastern Ukraine. Inset, a sole Moscow protester, one of many in Russian cities the same day. Most were arrested. Sign says, “No war against Ukraine! This shouldn’t happen!”

tion by the Russian Empire, both under the czars and later under the Stalinized Soviet Union. For more on this see the article, “Communist continuity backing Ukraine independence” in the Feb. 21 issue of the *Militant*.

‘Hands off Ukraine!’

Thousands across Ukraine from Kyiv to Odessa rallied Feb. 20 to remember the dozens of people who died eight years ago during a popular uprising known as the Maidan that toppled the pro-Moscow regime of President Viktor Yanukovich.

Significantly, given the Kremlin’s harsh clampdown on any opposition, handfuls of protesters gathered in Moscow the same day with signs like “Russia, do not touch Ukraine!” before they were arrested. In Rostov-on-Don, in southwestern Russia, close to the Ukraine border, more individual protests took place. Tatiana Sporisheva, 45, told CBC, “We don’t have big protests anymore, but that doesn’t mean that people accept” war against their Ukrainian neighbors.

With Putin’s Feb. 21 decision, Moscow confirmed “Russia’s status as an occupying power” in the “armed aggression against Ukraine that started in 2014,” the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union and the Kharkiv

Human Rights Protection Group noted in their statement the following day. Calling the Maidan a “coup,” Putin responded in 2014 by seizing the Crimean Peninsula and supporting the separatist conflict in the east with Russian arms and forces. That conflict has already taken 14,000 lives and displaced nearly 2 million people.

The two rights groups warned about “politically motivated persecution of those who disagree with the occupation” and the “forced relocation of people to Russia” now underway in eastern Ukraine.

In Ukrainian-controlled areas of Donbas, residents are bracing for a renewed Russian offensive. Mikhail Karablin, 67, who was born in Russia and moved to the Ukrainian town of Konstyantynivka more than 40 years ago, told the *Wall Street Journal* Feb. 22 that he dreads the possibility his adopted town could fall to separatist forces.

“They’re a plague, they came to this land with guns and turned Donetsk into a wasteland,” he said.

Moscow’s recognition extends to the separatists’ self-proclaimed borders, the entire Ukraine provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk. This area, almost two-thirds more than what they now control, was retaken by Ukrainian forces after months of fighting in 2014.



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—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Jon Donaire strikers rally in hard-fought California battle

SANTA FE SPRINGS, Calif. — Some 200 people rallied here Feb. 12 in support of striking bakery workers, members of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 37, at Rich's Jon Donaire Desserts factory. "I've been working for Jon Donaire for 19 years," striker Christina Lujan told the rally. "We decided to go out on strike as of Nov. 3. We are fighting for fair wages, affordable health care and respect. Year after year we've met expectations, goals for this company and we think it's time that we get, like they said, a 'piece of the cake,' because we deserve it. Many of us, the majority of us, have been here 19, 20, 30, 35 years.

"And our fight is not only for us. It's for those that follow us — our children, our grandchildren, our great-grandchildren — that they have a better way of life," she said. The workers, mostly women, are demanding \$1 an hour raise over three years, but the company has stubbornly refused.

The rally featured Liz Shuler, national president of the AFL-CIO. Also joining the strikers were members of the SMART rail union, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Writers Guild, Teamsters, Mobile Workers Alliance, a representative of the NFL Players Association and others.

The union announced Feb. 21 that a tentative contract has been reached, with a membership vote set for Feb. 23.

— Laura Garza

San Francisco city workers rally, demand more staffing

SAN FRANCISCO — Chanting "Staff it up or we'll shut it down!" over 500 city workers held a spirited lunchtime rally Feb. 16 outside City Hall here. The central demand was for city officials to hire more workers.

Eight unions organize street cleaners, bus drivers, airport cleaners and workers at public hospitals and clinics, libraries and museums, in City Hall, and at the water system and other facilities.

"Decades of disinvestment have left crucial public services dangerously understaffed," the union says. "Across the City, there are over 3,800 job positions that are unfilled, forcing workers to do

more with less." The crisis has been deepened during the pandemic, when applications for city help increased.

"Over the last couple years, we've been deemed essential workers," Service Employees International Union Local 1021 President Joseph Byrant told the protesters. "You know what? We've been essential workers since way before that. This city doesn't run without the workers here!"

In addition to the SEIU, other unions involved in the action included Firefighters, Electrical Workers, Transit Workers, Stationary Engineers, Teamsters, Laborers and Construction Trades.

San Francisco, with more billionaires per capita than any city on earth, the unions say, has a budget surplus of \$108 million and over \$1 billion in reserves.

Instead of bargaining with the unions, city officials propose to extend the existing union contracts. In addition to "staffing up," the workers are demanding wage increases, improvements in benefits to keep workers and their families in good health, and safe workplaces.

— Carole Lesnick

10 months on the picket line, Vancouver hotel workers rally

BURNABY, British Columbia — "Ten months on the picket line is too long!" UNITE HERE Local 40 member Lisa Secretaria told 40 locked-out workers at the Hilton Vancouver Metrotown Hotel here Feb. 14. It's a favorite destination for weddings in this



Militant/Laura Garza

Members of bakery workers' union, on strike at Rich's Jon Donaire Desserts since Nov. 3, rally in front of factory Feb. 12 in fight for wage raise, affordable health care and respect.

area, so workers used Valentine's Day to organize a mock wedding where the newlyweds vowed *not* to "tie the knot" at their hotel, holding up a banner saying, "Don't get married at the Hilton Metrotown."

The workers were locked out on April 15, just after the hotel bosses fired 97 long-term housekeepers, cooks, servers, front-desk staff and others and the unionists had staged a one-day protest strike. The hotel wants to eliminate daily room sanitizing, which raises workers' safety concerns and threatens their jobs, and is seeking major concessions.

"The fact is that over the 10-month lockout we got solidarity from a lot of

unions. Not just local, but nationally," Secretaria told the *Militant* on the picket line Feb. 11. "A retired teacher has been bringing us breakfast such as brownies for nine months! We have people dropping by and giving us \$50 for coffee. It gives us the strength to keep fighting."

Pickets explained the union members aren't entitled to unemployment, but the federal government has provided the company with wage subsidies.

The union has set up a hardship fund to help the locked-out workers at <https://ca.gofundme.com/f/hilton-metrotown-workers-hardship-fund>. Messages of solidarity can be sent to updates@local40union.com.

— Beverly Bernardo

Iowa machinists strike, fight Eaton bosses' attacks

Continued from front page

workers are not automatically in the union. Some of the nonunion hourly workers here have joined the strike.

"The company's offer included higher deductibles for medical coverage, a 2.5% raise the first year of the three-year contract, and 3% the next two years. I have two kids. We need raises to at least keep up with inflation," said solder assembler Shawn Marshall.

"They want to eliminate overtime pay for more than eight hours. They want to be able to tap you on your shoulder and say you have to stay another four hours

overtime. This would be devastating for family life and obligations. The local news media sugarcoats the company's offer. The last strike here was in 1966, so for many of us this is our first strike."

"Prices are rising every day and the company's proposals are not near enough," said striker Chris Fox. "They also want to cut how much they match on the 401(k) plan from 10% to 6%."

While the Cobham plant has been running for decades, it was bought by Eaton a year ago for \$2.8 billion. Eaton is a conglomerate with 87,000 workers worldwide.

Eaton bosses told the media they were "surprised" when the union workers went on strike, and they "encourage any employee who wishes to report to work to do so."

The Quad Cities area — Davenport and Bettendorf in Iowa and Rock Island and Moline in Illinois — is a manufacturing center, including 6,000 United Auto Workers members at John Deere, who were themselves on strike last fall. Other big manufacturers include the U.S. Army's Rock Island Arsenal, which makes weaponry and other military equipment; Hon office furniture; and a number of sizable food-processing plants.

Striker Lucie Workman is a member of the women's committee of Local 388. She described the solidarity the strike has received. "UAW members from John Deere drop off pizzas for us. Other unions have brought water and snacks. Tomorrow is a big day for us when many other unions are going to join us for an expanded picket line.

"Eaton made billions in profits last year. You'd think they could share some of it with us," she said. "But no — they're greedy."

Two John Deere UAW members were walking the picket line while I was there. One woman drove up and invited strikers to come to a free spaghetti dinner at her church on Feb. 26.

"We hope that the company will hear our call for respect and dignity from the picket line," IAM District 6 Business Representative John Herrig said in a statement to the press.

For information on how you can join in the picketing and support the strike, call IAM Local 388 at (563) 383-6289.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



March 10, 1997

U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright began a nine-country world tour in Rome February 16 to press the Clinton administration's foreign policy for the U.S. capitalist class. Foremost on Albright's agenda was an aggressive campaign to expand the North Atlantic Treaty Organization into central and eastern Europe.

The move would place imperialist military forces in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic and assert Washington's growing economic and military dominance in Europe.

Russia's National Security Council deputy secretary Boris Berezovsky called the NATO expansion "a totally aggressive decision with regard to Russia." He said the Kremlin would have to respond to the imperialist military moves "in the direction of defense."



March 10, 1972

Five thousand people are homeless in West Virginia, 70 are dead, and 200-350 are missing in the aftermath of the flood that destroyed 14 mining communities along Buffalo Creek.

The disaster brought forth statements of the utmost hypocrisy. Federal mining officials described the flood caused by the collapse of a coal-waste pile used by the Pittston mining company as a "tragic mistake." A vice-president of Pittston said the company considered the death and destruction to be caused by "the flood, which we believe, of course, to be an act of God."

But this disaster was neither a "mistake" nor an "act of God." It was another catastrophe caused by the negligent practices of a mining company. Responsibility also rests with the federal government and the state of West Virginia.



March 8, 1947

Without bothering to wait for Congressional approval, still less approval of the American people, the State Department replied favorably to a request of British imperialism for help in keeping the Greek people strapped in the strait-jacket of the reactionary monarchy. [President] Truman told Democratic and Republican leaders of Congress that Britain could hold out no longer than March 31 against the resistance of the Greek masses.

If Allied bayonets should be withdrawn, the monarch would collapse. The Greek people would set up a government of their own choice. Wall Street is in deadly fear of such a development.

Britain is forced to draw back because she is on the verge of collapse. Wall Street is thus in position to fall heir to the British empire.

Canadian rulers attack protest

Continued from front page

Convoy protest deployed hundreds of police from across Canada, supported by armored tactical vehicles, elite sharpshooters, horse cavalry, stun grenades, anti-riot weapon launchers, batons and pepper spray.

Some protesters, including trucker Csaba Vizi, were physically attacked by the cops. “They broke my body a little bit, but not my spirit,” he told the press. Close to 200 people have been arrested. If charged and convicted they face fines of up to 6,000 Canadian dollars (\$4,700) and prison sentences of up to five years.

Over 200 protesters’ bank and other financial accounts had been frozen under powers granted by the Emergencies Act. Seventy-nine trucks and other vehicles have been seized and, in many cases, their windows smashed by police to forcibly remove protesters from their vehicles.

The trucks could be sold by the city of Ottawa, Mayor Jim Watson said. “We actually have the ability [under the act] to confiscate those vehicles and sell them,” he boasted. “And I want to see them sold,” not returned to the truckers, he said.

“This too is an assault on the working class. It amounts to government legalized theft,” Tessier said. “This makes crystal clear that when the capitalist rulers talk about defending property, they’re talking about the property of the ruling rich, not that of people who work for a living. Working people and our unions should demand that all of the vehicles that have been seized be returned immediately, all of those arrested be freed and charges dropped.”

While the government assault on the convoy ended the anti-mandate protest, truckers, including owner-operators, continue to fight the attacks of trucking bosses and thieving brokers.

Trucker Lovepreet Singh Gill, who didn’t support the Ottawa action, told Al Jazeera that there are “major issues” in the trucking industry, such as unpaid wages and exploitation of foreign work-

ers, that need to be addressed.

Arshdeep Singh Kang, one of the truckers in Brampton, Ontario, fighting against wage theft, said that immigrants, who make up a significant percentage of truckers, are threatened with deportation, making it harder to unionize.

Richard Nunda, a trucker from Alberta, told the *Militant* at a truck stop near Montreal that owner-operators like himself “need a union. We must use brokers, but the rates are too low. Unions would be able to” defend our interests. “As it is now, there is no way you can complain.”

Nunda and his co-worker, Joel Ngeze, took copies of a statement by Philippe Tessier entitled “Oppose Ottawa’s Emergencies Act! Defend the democratic and political rights of working people!” to distribute to other truckers.

“Workers should organize to publicize and organize solidarity with these truckers’ fights,” Tessier said.

Rule by decree

The police operation in Ottawa was carried out under the draconian powers given to the state by the Emergencies Act, decreed Feb. 14 by the Liberal government of Justin Trudeau without either a vote or even any discussion in Canada’s elected Parliament. On Feb. 21 Parliament passed a motion backing the invocation of the act and extending it for 30 days, with the backing of the Liberals, the New Democratic Party and the Greens.

It’s the growing anger and frustration of working people with anti-working-class, undemocratic measures like these that fueled the Ottawa protest and similar actions across the country, including the blockades of bridges and roads used for hundreds of millions of dollars of trade by trucks between Canada and the United States.

“The fact that governments across Canada are more and more ruling by decree is a serious threat to working people and political rights,” the Communist League candidate said.

The Quebec government, for ex-



Truckers protest in Brampton, Ontario, Oct. 21, demanding bosses hand over wages stolen from drivers. “We need a union,” trucker Richard Nunda told the *Militant* outside Montreal.

ample, has been ruling by decree for almost two years in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic under the “health emergency” provisions of the Public Health Act.

It has used these powers to impose curfews, lockdowns, and vaccine mandates; put hundreds of thousands of people out of work; banned public and private gatherings; and closed down small businesses, driving many into bankruptcy.

It has also imposed mandatory overtime on nurses and canceled health workers’ vacations. Most of these measures are extremely unpopular and have led to protest actions by nurses, other health care workers and truckers.

The New Brunswick provincial government used its COVID state of emergency in November 2021 as a strike-breaking weapon to order 2,000 health care workers back to work with fines of up to \$CA20,400 a day for each worker failing to comply.

Massive smear campaign

Trudeau and the liberal press have smeared the protesters, especially the truckers, as reactionary, violent and ignorant fools. He has previously attacked the unvaccinated as being “very often misogynistic and racist,” people who should not be tolerated in a civilized society.

His remarks are a reflection of the loathing and fear of the working class by the capitalist rulers and their politicians of all stripes.

The Liberal government’s efforts to smear the convoy — which aroused sympathy from many workers sick of years of government shutdowns, travel restrictions and mandates — have extended into bourgeois politics. Trudeau has now accused the Conservatives, the largest opposition party in Canada’s Parliament, of standing “with people who wave swastikas ... with people who wave the Confederate flag.” While his accusations caused an uproar, he refused to apologize.

The Conservatives, along with the Bloc Québécois, another opposition party, disagree with the implementation of the Emergencies Act, arguing the government had enough police power to bring the Ottawa protests to an end without it. A majority of provincial premiers have the same position.

The Alberta government has now decided to challenge the use of the Emergencies Act in court. As well, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association has launched a suit against Ottawa’s action.

The New Democratic Party, which is supported by a number of unions, backs the government’s action. The Liberals are a minority government and couldn’t have passed the bill invoking the Emergencies Act without the NDP’s support.

“Many people are rightfully concerned that using the Emergencies Act now will mean a crackdown on protests in the future,” NDP leader Jagmeet Singh admitted. However, he tried to brush that argument aside with another barrage of slander. “This is not a protest. It is not peaceful. The organizers of this illegal occupation have been clear from the beginning. They came here to overthrow a democratically elected government.”

“Singh’s arguments, also advanced by the government, are totally false,” Tessier said. “The Ottawa protest has been almost entirely nonviolent. The claim that its goal was to overthrow a ‘democratically elected’ government is a lie. It’s Trudeau and Canada’s rulers who are attacking democratic rights.”

Most of the major unions have been silent in the face of Ottawa’s repression. The Canadian Labor Congress joined in the smear campaign, issuing a statement accusing those in the Freedom Convoy of promoting a message of “hate.”

“Working people and our unions need to oppose Ottawa’s attacks as well as defending fights by truckers for their rights and helping to organize them into unions,” Tessier said.

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Art exhibit gives graphic picture of Nazi Holocaust in Latvia

BY ARTHUR HUGHES

NEW YORK — Nov. 30 and Dec. 8, 2021, marked the 80th anniversary of the Nazi execution by firing squad of 25,000 Jews in the Rumbula Forest outside Riga, Latvia. It was the beginning of the Holocaust in that Baltic country, and came two months after a similar massacre of 30,000 Jews at the Babyn Yar ravine in Kyiv, Ukraine, and similar Nazi atrocities against Jews across Europe.

Of Latvia’s 94,000 Jews before the Nazi invasion of July 1941, only a few thousand survived the war.

One of them was Boris Lurie, an artist who witnessed his mother, sister, grandmother and girlfriend being rounded up for Rumbula. There they were forced to undress and then were shot by Waffen-SS executioners.

For the first time Lurie has an exhibition of his early artwork of the 1940s based on his experience of the Holocaust after he and his father, who also survived in German forced labor camps, emigrated here. “Boris Lurie: Nothing to Do But to Try,” is at the Museum of Jewish Heritage through April 29.

The exhibition of his paintings and drawings of Nazi camp life, portraits of his mother and self-portraits, family photographs and samples of his writings make for a powerful testament by a Holocaust survivor. *Boris Lurie in Riga: A Memoir*, which Lurie wrote in 1976, is available at the museum and serves as a catalogue for the show.

Boris Ilyich Lurie was born in Leningrad, Soviet Russia, July 18, 1924, to a Belarusian Jewish family from the Pale of Settlement, an area where Jews were allowed to live under the pogrom-ridden czarist regime. The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution transformed everything, granting citizenship to all Jews, including the Luries. His mother, Shaina Chashkina Lurie, was a dentist and socialist Zionist; his father, Ilya, a businessman dealing in leather and other commodities.

The revolution liberated the Baltic States from the “prison house of nations” that was czarist Russia. In 1926 Ilya and Shaina moved the Lurie family to Riga, capital of the now independent Latvia. Lurie’s father pursued logging, lumber and other businesses. His mother set up a dentistry practice.

From the historic influence of past co-



“Roll Call in Concentration Camp,” one of several paintings by Boris Lurie, portraying his experiences during Holocaust in Latvia. Lurie’s early work is on show for first time at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York.

lonial domination of the Baltics, Lurie’s education was in German, and he also learned Latvian and English. These languages later served him well. His first language was always Russian, and he spoke English with a marked accent.

His remembrances of life in Riga as a boy and youth in the 1930s, and then in German slave labor camps in Latvia, Poland and Germany, are recounted in his *Boris Lurie in Riga*. Written after Lurie’s visit to Riga in 1975, going back for the first time since 1944, it is a searing account of his experience in the Holocaust — the Riga slave-labor ghetto; the Lenta, Salaspils and Kaiserwald camps outside Riga; Stutthof near Danzig in Poland; and finally Buchenwald-Magdeburg in Germany, where he was liberated April 18, 1945, by U.S. troops.

On Nov. 30, 1941, and again on Dec. 8, women, children, men who stayed with their families, and elderly men were marched from the German-created Riga ghetto to the execution grounds in Rumbula Forest, seven miles out of town. There they were marched to trenches dug in the soil and shot by German SS troops.

With the Stalin-Hitler pact dividing up Poland and the Baltic States between Nazi and Soviet occupation, Riga was

under Soviet rule from June 1940 until July 1941, when the Nazi army invaded Latvia. As a 16-year-old, Lurie was impressed by the might of the Red Army. “We believed in Soviet invincibility,” he wrote. But then, “in a week’s time it is over, I see German motorized columns... The Red Army is no more, as if disappeared by a magic wand.”

Some Jews — “the lucky ones” — were able to retreat with it to the east and survived. Several thousand served and most died in the Latvian Division during the Siege of Moscow.

But the vast major-

ity of the 40,000 Jews of Riga were caught up and herded into two ghettos. Lurie’s mother, sensing what was going to happen to the Jews, made the fateful decision to divide the family. She, her own mother, and daughter Josephina remained in the ghetto, while Lurie and his father went to the Arbeitslager Work Camp for those able-bodied men destined to toil in slave-labor camps. The women all perished in the Rumbula Forest slaughter.

After liberation from the Buchenwald-Magdeburg slave-labor camp, Lurie used his knowledge of English and German to get a job with the U.S. Army. This in turn provided an avenue for him and his father to come to New York, where his surviving sister had been during the war.

Searing portraits of Holocaust

It was then that Lurie began to relive the Holocaust in the series of paintings, drawings and photographs that are “Nothing to Do But to Try,” a phrase he wrote about struggling to create art out of his Holocaust experience. Among the paintings in the exhibition are the haunting image of Shaina Lurie, “Portrait of My Mother Before Shooting,” and “Roll Call in Concentration Camp.”

In a 1950 letter to the *New York Times*, Lurie wrote, “It will hardly be remembered, except unfortunately by a very few, that December 8th stands for anything but the day of the attack on Pearl Harbor. As Japanese planes dropped their first loads on the American base, 25,000 Jewish children, women and old people were being murdered.”

Like at Babyn Yar in Ukraine, there was no memorial to the massacre there. It was only when a group of Jews in 1963 put up a canvas at the forest, titled “The Jew,” with arm upraised, that there was any recognition of what had transpired. Local authorities took it down. Instead, they put up a generic stone monument with words in Latvian, Russian and Yiddish, just reading “To the victims of fascism,” with a hammer and sickle.

No mention of the fact that the victims were Jews. It was only in 2002 that a monument — a large menorah sculpture surrounded by hundreds of stones with the names of some who perished — was erected, making clear the massa-

cre of the Jews there was part of the Holocaust.

The paintings and other materials in the exhibit are a powerful reflection of what befell Jews under Nazi rule. Any escape from the slaughter was cut off by the capitalist rulers in the U.S. and England, who closed their borders to the Jews.

Lurie’s later work

Not included in the exhibition is Lurie’s later work. He died in 2008. In the 1950s he founded the NO!art group, which rejected art as a commodity. Lurie was promoted in Europe by the art historian and collector Arturo Schwarz, who was drawn to a life in art when, as a teenager in

Alexandria, Egypt, he read the “Manifesto: Towards a Free Revolutionary Art” written by Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky, surrealist André Breton and Mexican muralist Diego Rivera.

Inspired by the triumph of the Cuban Revolution, Lurie and his life-long friend and sculptor, Rocco Armento, got in Armento’s wreck of a car and drove from New York to Miami in 1959 and caught the overnight ferry to Havana to see it for themselves.

Fifty-eight years later the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes de Habana put on a retrospective of Lurie’s later work, “Boris Lurie in Habana.” Included was his painting, “Mort Aux Juifs (Israel Imperialiste).” (Death to the Jews, Israel Is Imperialist), Lurie’s protest against an anti-Semitic slogan attributed to Fatah, the Palestinian organization.

Fidel Castro, central leader of the Cuban Revolution, understood the horror of the Holocaust and defended the right of Israel to exist as a refuge for Jews. “The Jews have lived an existence that is much harder than ours,” he told Jeffrey Goldberg from *Atlantic* magazine in 2010. “There is nothing that compares to the Holocaust.”

When Goldberg asked Castro if he thought the state of Israel had a right to exist, Castro said, “Yes, without a doubt.”

I strongly recommend *Militant* readers see the exhibition.

Arthur Hughes, a long-time member and supporter of the Socialist Workers Party and a volunteer on the *Militant* staff, knew and worked with Boris Lurie.

Further reading. . .

Why is Jew-hatred still raising its ugly head? What are its class roots? Why is there no solution to the Jewish question without revolutionary struggles that transform working people as we fight to transform our world?

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‘Malcolm X, a revolutionary leader of the US working class’

To mark the anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X on Feb. 21, 1965, this week’s Books of the Month page features Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. Malcolm “converged politically with other revolutionists the world over, including proletarian revolutionists, communists, here in the United States,” Barnes said. The excerpt is from the chapter, “Malcolm X: Revolutionary Leader of the Working Class,” based on Barnes’ 1987 talk in Atlanta. © Copyright 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

SPECIAL FEATURE

BY JACK BARNES

Malcolm X emerged on American soil as the most representative revolutionary leader with a mass hearing in the latter half of the twentieth century. He converged politically with other revolutionists the world over, including proletarian revolutionists, communists, here in the United States. He was going in the direction the world revolution was going, *against* colonialism and capitalism, and *with* those who were pushing revolutionary struggle forward.

Many individuals, in many countries, who aspire to lead revolutions on their home turf are still catching



Malcolm X meets crowd at March 22, 1964, rally in Harlem. After breaking with Nation of Islam, Malcolm emerged as “the face and authentic voice” of the coming American revolution.

up with Malcolm on many fronts.

Malcolm’s course during these final months is sometimes described as a new form of Pan-Africanism, and Malcolm himself used that term a few times. But “Pan-Africanism” captures neither the scope nor the revolutionary political character of Malcolm’s internationalism and anti-imperialism. Malcolm, of course, recognized the shared aspects of the oppression facing those of African origin — and of their resistance to that oppression. Because of the combined legacy of colonialism and chattel slavery, Blacks shared many such elements whether they lived and toiled in Africa itself, in the Caribbean and Latin America, in Europe, or what Malcolm, echoing Elijah Muhammad’s marvelous term, called “this wilderness of North America.”

“Many of us fool ourselves into thinking of Afro-Americans as those only who are here in the United States,” Malcolm said in one of his last talks, just five days before he was assassinated. “But the Afro-American is that large number of people in the Western Hemisphere, from the southernmost tip of South America to the northernmost tip of North America, all of whom have a common heritage and have a common origin when you go back to the history of these people. ... [And when Africans] migrate to England, they pose a problem for the English. And when they migrate to France,

they pose a problem for the French.”

At the same time, Malcolm increasingly identified with, championed, and explained revolutionary struggles the world over — from the Chinese Revolution, to the Cuban Revolution, to battles for national liberation wherever they were being fought, and by people of whatever hue of skin color.

At this meeting tonight, however, I want to try to make the case that is perhaps the most important of all, not just for revolutionists in this country but those around the world. I want to make the case that *Malcolm X was a revolutionary leader of the working class in the United States*.

That may sound strange, for a number of reasons. It may sound strange because of the small degree of support Malcolm had among workers who were Caucasian, at least those he knew of. It may sound strange because of the weakened state of the labor movement and procapitalist positions of the union officialdom that I described earlier, views that were diametrically opposed to Malcolm’s. It may sound strange, if for no other reason than that Malcolm himself never directly addressed this question.

But the fact remains that the social and political transformations that will be wrought by a popular revolution in the United States — a revolution that will be led by the vanguard of the working class, or else go down to a bloody defeat — are decisive for the oppressed

and exploited the world over. Among other things, the conquest of power by the working class and its allies — the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat — is the necessary step that can open the road for Blacks, and for all supporters of Black rights, to successfully fight to end racist oppression of every kind once and for all.

In the leadership of revolutionary working-class struggles in this country, workers who are Black will occupy a vanguard place and weight disproportionate to their numbers in the U.S. population. That’s what all modern history teaches us. That fact is testified to by the record of powerful social and political struggles in the United States: from battles during the closing years of the Civil War itself; to Radical Reconstruction and the efforts to prevent the imposition of peonage among the freed slaves; to the struggles that built farmers movements and the industrial unions in the 1920s and 1930s; to the mass proletarian movement that toppled Jim Crow segregation, fueled the rise of greater political self-confidence and nationalist consciousness among Blacks in the 1960s, and inspired what became the mass movement against the imperialist war in Vietnam.

Malcolm X was a legitimate political heir to all these struggles.

But who are *Malcolm’s* heirs?

Following his assassination, some who looked to Malcolm were disappointed because the political organization he founded and led, the OAAU, died with him. Given the enemies they faced, none of the relatively few OAAU cadres Malcolm had brought over from the Nation of Islam were able to step forward to carry on the fight and shoulder the leadership to continue Malcolm’s revolutionary political course. That’s a fact.

But the heirs of Malcolm X *will* come forward — all over the world, including right here in the United States — as revolutionary struggles advance, as the exploited and oppressed organize to resist the devastating consequences of capitalist crises and imperialist domination and wars. More leaders like Malcolm *will* come forward, including in the labor movement. And they will need to know who Malcolm was, what Malcolm stood for, what he fought for and dedicated his life to.

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Oppose Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine!

The Russian government’s invasion of Donetsk and Luhansk is a blow to working people in Ukraine, Russia and worldwide. It must be opposed.

Like its occupation of Crimea in 2014, Moscow’s violation of Ukrainian sovereignty is aimed at advancing the reach of Russia’s capitalist rulers. They are seizing territory, subjugating the Ukrainian people and threatening peoples across Eastern Europe in countries Moscow lost control over when the Stalinist-run Soviet Union came apart in 1991. And Vladimir Putin’s regime will use these war moves to intensify assaults on political rights at home.

In Ukraine, the Russian rulers seek to regain control they lost in 2014 when popular mobilizations by hundreds of thousands of workers, farmers and youth overthrew the tyrannical pro-Moscow regime of Viktor Yanukovich.

After Yanukovich’s overthrow, the Kremlin seized Crimea, launching a brutal assault against the Tatar people and worsening living conditions for working people as a whole. They funded and orchestrated a war by pro-Moscow separatist forces in eastern Ukraine. The bloody toll from Moscow’s conflict is paid for by both Ukrainians and Russians.

Putin insists that the Ukrainian people, who fought centuries of oppression imposed by Russia’s czarist rulers, are really Russians and their country’s independence should be crushed.

As workers here organize to stand with workers and farmers in Ukraine against Moscow’s war, they should also oppose the sanctions imposed on Russia

by Washington, as well as calls for the U.S. rulers to unleash its military might there. Their imperialist foreign policy is an extension of their relentless assaults on our wages, jobs and rights here.

Working people need our own foreign policy — in opposition to U.S. military moves abroad and in solidarity with workers and farmers fighting to defend their interests against exploitation and oppression worldwide.

Washington’s last war in Europe was a brutal bombing campaign against the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, furthering the dismemberment of that country. The U.S. rulers asserted their dominance in Europe on the corpses of the Yugoslav peoples. Everywhere Washington intervenes it does so solely to advance the rulers’ power and enrich their class at the expense of workers and farmers.

Under the revolutionary leadership of V.I. Lenin, the Bolshevik government in Russia championed the rights of the Ukrainian people to self-determination. It combated all expressions of Great Russian chauvinism and strengthened the unity and fighting capacities of working people to advance the forging of a truly voluntary Soviet republic. That was made possible because the Bolsheviks had led workers and farmers to overturn capitalist rule in 1917 and make a socialist revolution.

Standing on that continuity, Socialist Workers Party members participate in and urge others to join actions to demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Moscow’s forces from Ukraine.

SF school board recall reflects rulers’ crisis

Continued from page 4

cialist wings of the Democratic Party, as did the 2021 election results.

This reflects the political crisis wracking the capitalist rulers, as neither of their two main political parties — the Democrats and Republicans — are capable of providing their masters with political stability. Nor can they chart a way out of the double whammy facing working people of skyrocketing inflation and worldwide capitalist economic stagnation. The World Bank forecasts that the economies in many countries, large and small, will remain depressed well into this decade.

And neither capitalist party has a way to defend the declining power of Washington in the world today, as is clear in the war moves unfolding today in Ukraine.

Above all, their political crisis is fueled by their fear of working people. They fear that we less and less look to them and their parties for a road forward, and more and more to ourselves, seeking to find ways to defend our class and stand up to the bosses. This underlies the hysterical venom directed by capitalist politicians and the press toward truck drivers and others protesting government mandates in Canada.

Because of the depth of the political crisis, the Democrats and Republicans increasingly act to strike blows at each other, upending the norms

guiding the functioning of capitalist politics for decades. And as they do so, they toss aside constitutional protections working people need.

Attacks on constitutional rights

The Democratic Party-dominated North Carolina State Board of Elections is threatening to ban Republican Rep. Madison Cawthorn from running for office, saying the 14th Amendment to the Constitution gives them the power to do so. One of the sections of that amendment states no person shall become a member of Congress if they have “engaged in insurrection or rebellion ... or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof.” This was intended to prevent former leaders of the Confederacy who fought to uphold slavery during the Civil War from running for office.

The elections board claims that when Cawthorn spoke at a rally of supporters of Donald Trump on Jan. 6, 2021, he lent encouragement to those who broke into Congress later that day. But he didn’t urge anyone to invade Congress or break the law. He exercised his constitutional right to free speech. Former President Trump also spoke at the rally. This move against Cawthorn is a trial balloon for Democrats’ hopes to bar Trump from ever running again.

Efforts such as these are a threat to political rights.

Like all such efforts, they end up being turned against the workers’ movement and working-class parties like the Socialist Workers Party.

“Working people need our own party, a labor party,” SWP candidate Joel Britton said. “SWP members set an example today of what such a party can do — building support for struggles by truckers; for oil workers fighting for a contract at Marathon, Chevron and other refineries; and joining protests demanding amnesty for immigrants without papers. Everywhere they point to our need to unite and point a road toward taking political power into our own hands.”



AP photo/Eric Risberg

Dr. Amos Brown, left, San Francisco NAACP president, speaks against school board moves in 2019 to cover up mural at George Washington High School. Right, Rev. Arnold Townsend.

Crisis in West Africa

Continued from front page

Tuaregs — an oppressed ethnic minority of semi-nomadic herders and traders — and reactionary Islamist groups that had wrested control of the northern part of the country from central government control. The French intervention has been backed up by thousands of soldiers from African countries and some from Germany, fighting under the U.N. flag.

Even after the government regained control of the north, the Islamist groups continue to wreak havoc with hit-and-run attacks. They spread to bordering countries, including Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger, as well as to Chad and the coastal states of Benin, Ghana, Togo and Ivory Coast.

The Islamist groups take advantage of the deep economic and social crisis throughout the countries of the Sahel, which separates the Sahara desert to the north from the rest of Africa. This is intertwined with the legacy of colonial rule, including discrimination against minorities and divisions between herders and farmers. In Mali the Islamists are based mostly on the Fulani — semi-nomadic herders — and have clashed with self-defense groups based on the Dogon, who are mostly farmers.

Since 2015 thousands of civilians in the region have been killed either by the Islamist groups, including 1,300 in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso in 2021 alone, or by government or French forces. Nearly 200,000 people have fled their homes. Since the start of the clashes with the Islamists in West Africa, 53 French soldiers have been killed, 48 of them in Mali.

The military in Mali carried out two coups — one in 2020 and another last year as French efforts to staunch the insurgency failed to end it. In December 2021 the Mali military invited the Russian-based Wagner Group to train its soldiers and provide security for government officials.

Decline of ‘la Francafrique’

Angry at Moscow’s meddling in what French imperialism considers “la Francafrique,” French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian on Jan. 31 called the military government of Mali illegitimate and “out of control.” The next day the regime gave the French ambassador 72 hours to leave the country.

Macron said he will close the three French bases in Mali over the next six months and move their 2,400 troops to neighboring Niger. But Malian government spokesman Col. Abdoulaye Maiga demanded the French troops leave “without delay.”

Meanwhile, hundreds of mercenary thugs from the Wagner Group have started arriving. They won’t do any better than the French imperialist army against the Islamist groups.

Landlocked Mali, with a population of over 20 million, is the 13th poorest country in the world with a per capita gross domestic product of just \$1,614 a year. The situation for the country’s herders, farmers and fishermen has worsened under the impact of economic sanctions imposed by the French-dominated Economic Community of West African States in the wake of the coup.

A similar crisis is unfolding in Burkina Faso. In 2014 a mass uprising there overthrew the despotic government of Blaise Compaore. He had seized power in a counterrevolution — welcomed by Paris — that overthrew the popular revolutionary government headed by Thomas Sankara in 1987.

On Jan. 24 the military in Burkina Faso overthrew its civilian regime, saying a heavier hand was needed to wage war against Islamist terrorists. At a rally the day after the coup, civilian supporters of the move waved Russian flags and held signs saying, “No to France!”

Over the last several decades, Beijing and China-based capitalist companies have increasingly entered into the competition to exploit the natural resources, markets and labor in the African continent. On a much smaller scale, Moscow has entered the fray, mostly with arms sales and offering its armed thugs.

In the years ahead the deepening world capitalist economic crisis will fuel even fiercer competition for African markets and resources, which include huge deposits of uranium, oil, gas, gold and more. As long as capitalist rule dominates Africa, Islamist violence will continue to seep through its pores. And it will be working people there who will pay the price.